DOUGLASS BROS. LEWIS H. DOUGLASS, EDITOR.

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SPEECH

HON. JAMES T. RAPIER or Alabama, in the House of Representatives. Tuesday, June 9, 1874.

Mr. Rapier said: Mr. SPEAKER: I had hoped there would be no protracted discussion on the civil-rights bill. It has been debated all over the rights bill. It has been debated all over the country for the last seven years; twice it has done duty in our national political campaigns; and in every minor election during that time it has been pressed into service for the purpose of intimidating the weak white men who are inclined to support the republican ticket. I was certain until now that most persons were acquainted with its provisions, that they understood its meaning; therefore it was no longer to them the more therefore it was no longer to them the mon-ster it had been depicted, that was to break

down all social barriers, and compel one man to recognize another socially, whether agreeable to him or not.

I must confess it is somewhat embarrassing able to him or not.

I must confess it is somewhat embarrassing for a colored man to urge the passage of this bill, because if he exhibit an earnestness in the matter and express a desire for its immediate passage, straightway he is charged with a desire for social equality, as explained by the demagogue and understood by the ignorant white man. But then it is just as embarrassing for him not to do so, for, if he remain silent while the struggle is being carried on around, and for him, he is liable to be charged with a want of interest in a to be charged with a want of interest in a matter that concerns him more than any one else, which is enough to make his friends desert his cause. So in steering away from Scylla I may run upon Charybdis. But the anomalous, and I may add the supremely ridiculous, position of the negro at this time, in this country, compel me to say something. Here his condition is without a comparison, parallel alone to itself. Just think that the law recognizes my right upon this floor as a law-maker, but that there is no law to secure

to me any accomodations whatever while traveling here to discharge my duties as a Representative of a large and wealthy constituency. Here I am the peer of the proudest, but on a steamboat or car I am not equal to the most degraded. Is not this anomalous and ridiculous?

What little I shall say will be more in the way of stating the case than otherwise for

declaration that this land is the asylum of the oppressed, to bear a member of the highest legislative body in the world declare from his place, upon his responsibility as a Representative, that notwithstanding his political position he has no civil rights that another class is bound to respect. Here a foreigner can learn what he cannot learn in any other country, that it is possible for a man to be half free and half slave, or, in other words, he will see that it is possible for a man to enjoy political rights while he is for a man to enjoy political rights while he is

Mr. Cardoza, treasurer of the State of South Carolina, was on his way home from the West. His route lay through Atlanta. There he made request for a sleeping-berth. Not only was he refused this, but was denied life because he insisted upon his rights as a traveler. He was compelled, a most elegant and accomplished gentleman, to take a seat in a dirty smoking-car, along with the traveling

I affirm, without the fear of contradiction, that any white ex-convict (I care not what may have been his crime, nor whether the bair on the shaven side of his head has had rough box with the drunkards, apple-sellers, railroad hands, and next to any dead that may be in transit, regardless of how far de-composition may have progressed. Sentinels are placed at the doors of the better coaches, Tender, pure, intelligent young ladies are forced to travel in this way if they are guilty of the crime of color, the only unpardonable sin known in our Christian and Bible lands, where sinning against the Holy Ghost (what-ever that may be) sinks into insignificance when compared with the sin of color. If from any cause we are compelled to lay over, the best bed in the hotel is his if he can pay for it, while I am invariably turned away, hungry and cold, to stand around the railway station until the departure of the next train, it matters not how long, thereby en-dangering my health, while my life and property are at the mercy of any highwayman who may wish to murder and rob me.

And I state without fear of being gains ayed, the statement of the gentleman from Ten-nessee to the contrary notwithstanding, that there is not an inn between Washington and Montgomery, a distance of more than a thou-sand miles, that will accommodate me to a bed or meal. Now, then, is there a man upon this noor who is so heartless, whose breast is so void of the better feelings, as to say that this brutal custom needs no regulation? I hold that it does, and that Congress is the body to regulate it. Authority for its action is found not only in the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution, but by virtue of that amendment (which makes all persons born here citizens,) authority is found in article 4, section 2 of the Federal Constitution, which declares in positive language that the citizens of each State shall have the same rights as the citizens of the several State. States." Let me read Mr. Brightly's comment upon this clause; he is considered good authority, I believe. In describing the several rights he says they may be all comprehended under the following general heads: "Protection by the Government; the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the right to acquire and possess property of every kind. quire and possess property of every kind, Court.
and to pursue and obtain happiness and safety; the right of a citizen of one State to pass | Alabama has to say on this point:

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through or to reside in any other State for ursuits, or otherwise."

It is very clear that the right of locomotion

lursuits, or otherwise."

It is very clear that the right of locomotion without hinderance and everything pertaining thereto is embraced in this clause; and every lawyer knows if any white mán in ande bellum times had been refused first-class passage in a steamboat or car, who was fee from any contagious disease, and was compelled to go on deek of a boat or into a baggage-car, and any accident had happened to him while he occupied that place, a lawsuit would have followed and damages would have been given by any jury to the plaintiff; and whether any accident had happened or not in the case I have referred to, a suit would have been brought for a denial of rights, and no one doubts what would have been the verdict. Whate men had rights then that common carriers were compelled to respect, and I demand the same for the colored men now.

Mr. Speaker, whether this deduction from the clause of the Constitution just read was applicable to the negro prior to the adoption of the several late amendments to our organic law is not now a question, but that it does apply to hum in his new relations no intelligent man will dispute. Therefore I come to the national, instead of going to the local Legislatures for relief, as has been suggested, because the grievance is national and not local; because Congress is the law-making power of the Government, whose duty it is to see that there be no unjust and odious discriminations made between its citizens. I look to the Government in the place of the several States, because it claims my first allegiance, exacts at my hands strict obedience to its laws, and because it promises in the implied contract between every citizen and

legiance, exacts at my hands strict obedience to its laws, and because it promises in the implied contract between every citizen and the Government to protect my life and property. I have fulfilled my part of the contract to the extent I have been called upon, and I demand that the Government, through Congress, do likewise. Every day my life and property are exposed, are left to the mercy of others, and will be so as long as every hotel-keeper, rail-road conductor, and steamboat captain can refuse me with impunity the accommodations common to other travelers. I hold further, if the Government cannot secure to a citizen his guaranteed rights it ought not to call upon him to perform the same duties that are performed by another class of citizens who are in the few and full crieves to feet. n the free and full enjoyment of every civil

way of stating the case than otherwise, for I am certain I can add nothing to the arguments already made in behalf of the bill. If in the course of my remarks I should use language that may be considered inclegant, I have only to say that it shall be as elegant as that used by the opposition in discussing this measure; if undignified, it shall not be more so than my subject; if ridiculous, I enter the plea that the example has been set by the democratic side of the House, which claims the right to set examples. I wish to say in justice to myself that no one regrets more than I do the necessity that compels one to the manner born to come in these Halls with hat in hand (so to speak) to ask at the hand of his political peers the same public rights they enjoy. And I shall feel ashamed for my country if there be any foreigners present, who have been lured to our shores by the popular but untruthful declaration that this land is the asylum of the oppressed, to hear a member of the highest legislative body in the world declare

man to be half free and half slave, or, in other words, he will see that it is possible for a man to enjoy political rights while he is denied civil ones; here he will see a man legislating for a free people, while his own chains of civil slavery hang about him, and are far more galling than any the foreigner left behind him; here he will see what is not to be seen elsewhere, that position is no mantle of protection in our "land of the free and home of the brave;" for I am subjected toffar more outrages and indignities in coming to and going from this capital in discharge of my public duties than any criminal in the country providing he white. Instead of my position shielding me from insult, it too often invites it.

Let me cite a case. Many months ago

or, in other words, he was forced to give satisfactory evidence that he was not a man te Montgomery, that all the way down he will be treated as the convict. He will be be treated as the convict. He will be allowed a berth in a sleeping car with all its comforts, while I will be forced into a dirty rough box with the drunkards, apple-sellers, it than in the breasts of those who have railread bands and next to any dead that railroad hands, and next to any dead that may be in transit, regardless of how far decomposition may have progressed. Sentinels are placed at the doors of the better coaches, with positive instructions to keep persons of color out; and I must do them the justice to say that they guard these search programs in the breasts of those who have towering intellects and are aware of it. Henry Ward Beecher reflected the feelings of the latter class when on a certain occasion he said: "Turn the negro loose; I am not say that they guard these search programs of could afford to say this, all white man one with positive instructions to keep persons of a rand to run the race of life with him. He color out; and I must do them the justice to roll afford to say this, all white men cansay that they guard these sacred portals with not; but what does the other class say? a vigilance that would have done credit to "Build a Chinese wall between the negro the flaming swords at the gates of Eden.

Tender, pure, intelligent young ladies are of character and honest ambition, cut him

the condition of the colored man; and so skep-tical have the Democracy become respecting the Constitution, brought about by their un-successful efforts to find constitutional objec-tions to eyery step that is taken to elevate the negro, that now they hggin to doubt the constitutionality of the Constitution itself. The most they have agreed to do is to obey present laws bearing on manhood suffrage until they are repealed by Congress or de-cided to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

should vote (another right, as I understand the Constitution.) why is it that Ku-Klux Klans were organized to prevent him from exercising the right of an American citizen, namely, casting the ballot—the very thing it they said he had a right to do?

The professed belief and practice are sadly at variance, and must be intelligently harmonized before I can be made to believe that they are willing to acknowledge that I have any rights under the Constitution or elsewhere. He boasts of the magnanimity of Kentucky in allowing the negro to vote without qualification, while to enjoy the same privilege in Massachusetts he is required to read the constitution of that State. He was every unhappy in this comparison. Why, sir, his State does not allow the negro to vote at all. When was the constitution of Kentucky amended so as to grant him the elective frauchise? They vote there by virtue of the fifteenthes.

without special permission from the city au-thorities. But on his return he finds that the slave pens have been torn down, and

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"The Democratic and Conservative party of the State of Alabama, in entering upon the State of Indiana, in entering upon the Indiana in Indiana in

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treated I am informed with marked distinction. And in the State of Louisiana a very prominent gentleman saw proper to espouse the Greeley cause, and when the fight was over and the McEnery government saw fit to send on a committee to Washington to present their case to the President, this colored gentleman was selected as one of that committee. On arriving in the city of New Orleans prior to his departure, he was taken to the Saint Charles, the most aristocratic hotel in the South. When they started he occupied a berth in the sleeping-car; at every eating-house he was treated like the rest of them, no distinction whatever. And when they arrived at Montgomery I was at the depot, just starting for New York. Not only did the conductor refuse to allow me a berth in the sleeping-car, but I was also denied a seat in the first-class carriage. Now, what was the difference between us? Nothing but our political faith. To prove this I have only to say that just a few months before this had happened, he, along with Frederick Douglass and others, was denied the same privileges he enjoyed in coming here. And now that he has returned to the right party again I can tell him that never more will he ride in another sleeping-car in the South unless this bill becomes law. There never was a truer saying than that circumstances alter cases.

a vote, a half dozen governors in the South figure as usurpers.

This is the legitimate conclusion of the argument, that the negro is not a man and is not entitled to all the public rights common to other men, and you cannot escape it. But when I press my claims I am asked, "Is it good policy?" My answer is, "Policy is specified by the second of the committee of arrangements on that it good policy?" My answer is, "Policy is a vote, a half dozen governors in the South barbeaue, and did address one of the largest at the Seymour and Blair barbeaue, and did address one of the largest at arbitration; M. Grevy's Presidency of the ver assembled in that part of the State. This I can prove by my simon-pure democration of the Duc de Broglie: Er. Fowle's Broad Church views or Mr. Partridge's democratic theories; Mr. Spring Rice's speeches in the House of Commons or Sir Frederick Curier's operations in India 2".

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COMMUNICATIONS

STATES AND TERRITORIES.

PARIS, May 28, 1874.

To the E-titor of the New National Eru It has been so long since I have had the bleasure of writing anything for your paper, that I hardly know how to commence, or upon what topic to write; under the circumstances I can think of no better sebject than the one concerning our old friend MELVIL BLONCOURT.

Deputy from Gaudaloupe to the National As-

You are, no doubt, aware that some monthago General l'Admirault, Governor of Paris, laid before the Assembly at Versailles, a paper bearing charges against Deputy Blon-

Civil Rights Bill. I said if the school clause was passed Congress should give some guarantee that when these States fail to support the schools we shall not suffer, but can feel safe regardless to their doings. These are only my opinions, which could have had no effect whatever.

Now, gentlemen, turn your guns in the right direction and combat with those who was sent with powers delegated to them through the black man's vote to battle for their rights, and has since failed in doing so. Respectfully yours,

W. B. Derrick.